

Don't backtrack on ISA, Najib

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KOTA KINABALU: Sabah BN partner, United Pasok Momogun Kadazandusun Organisation (Upko) wants Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak and his administration to stick to their decision on abolishing the draconian Internal Security Act (ISA) and not succumb to 'internal' pressure to revive it.

Upko secretary general Donald Mojuntin said any attempt by government officials to support irresponsible calls to re-implement the ISA would 'discredit' the government's commitment to Najib's political and government transformation agenda.

"The current government is on the right track to include the abolishment of ISA as part of its political and government transformation programme.

"Any notion from any government representative to support the return of the ISA would discredit the current government and it would show a lack of conviction and commitment to a solid and wise decision," he said.

Mojunting was responding to a suggestion by former premier Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad to re-implement the ISA to deal with "certain extremist groups" which he described as "immature and reckless" and out to destabilize the country.

Dr Mahathir's suggestion received the backing of Inspector General of Police Khalid Abu Bakar and the Attorney General Abdul Gani Patail who said it was the government's prerogative whether or not to re-introduce the ISA.

Khalid had reportedly said that it is not wrong to introduce the ISA even though a similar Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 has been enacted, saying that "both laws are suitable for different reasons."

Umno-linked Perkasa has further called for a referendum on the suggestion.

In a statement here yesterday, Mojuntin reminded that Malaysia was a "recognized parliamentary democracy" and warned against "excessively harsh" laws.

"When ISA was abolished we were the first to sing praises. Upko has always been against the draconian ISA.

"Malaysia is a de-facto and recognised parliamentary democracy. Its citizens are mature and knowledgeable.

"There is no place for an excessively harsh and so obviously unpopular law such as the ISA," he said.

Mojuntin's statement follows a warning from Dayak majority Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS). PRS is also a BN ally.

Yesterday PRS supreme council member Richard Will Uban said the current volley of statements from those linked to the Najib administration on the ISA and Allah issue would cost the ruling party.

"If this is politically motivated and they are desperate to win back the Malay votes, then they have chosen to do it at the expense of their fixed deposit partners.

"This unwise and ungrateful move is definitely not welcomed to both the minority in Sarawak and Sabah," he said taking offence to Dr Mahathir labeling Borneo Christians as "extremists" because they had been vocal over the recent raid in Selangor and related alleged anti-Christian policies spewed by the federal authorities.

The ISA was widely criticised as a draconian act that allowed the Home Ministry and the police to detain individuals without trial.

Enforced for over 60-years, the ISA saw dozens of opposition members and dissidents being thrown into the infamous Kamunting detention center, without trial.

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